

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 KINSHA 06417 201024Z

ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00  
DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 /034 W  
-----001001 201236Z /53

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FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 470

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 6417

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, CG

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: PAN AM'S SUSPENSION OF SERVICES

REF: A) STATE 145533; B) KINSHASA 3619

1. AS NOTED REF B MOST SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF PAN AM PULLOUT WOULD DIRECTLY AFFECT ONLY PAN AM: INCREASED DIFFICULTY IN REPATRIATING CURRENT RECEIVABLES AND EARNINGS, POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECT ON PROFITABLE HOTEL INTERCONTINENTAL OPERATIONS, AND HARDER RE-ENTRY INTO THE MARKET IF AND WHEN ZAIRE'S ECONOMIC PICTURE IMPROVES. THE EFFECT ON THE ZAIRIAN ECONOMY IS LIKELY TO BE NIL.

2. HOWEVER, THE TIMING OF A PAN AM ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUSPENSION OF SERVICES COULD CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR THE USG. NO MATTER WHEN OR HOW THE ANNOUNCEMENT IS MADE, MOBUTU WOULD BE INCLINED TO SUSPECT THAT PAN AM'S DECISION WAS MADE WITH THE APPROVAL IF NOT THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE USG; AT A MINIMUM, HE WOULD FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THE USG COULD NOT INDUCE PAN AM TO MAINTAIN SERVICE IF IT SO CHOSE. IF THE ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD FOLLOW TOO CLOSELY ON THE RECENT PARIS AND BRUSSELS MEETINGS, IT COULD HELP UNDERCUT OUR ATTEMPTS TO PROMPT MOBUTU TO UNDERTAKE THE REFORMS NECESSARY TO REVIVE THE ZAIRIAN ECONOMY AS A PRECONDITION TO ANY ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE. HE COULD WELL ARGUE THAT PAN AM'S DECISION (AND, BY EXTENSION IN HIS MIND, THAT OF THE USG) CONSTITUTES A VOTE OF NO-CONFIDENCE JUST WHEN ZAIRE IS FACING NEW PROBLEMS AND IS BEING  
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 KINSHA 06417 201024Z

FORCED BY WESTERN PRESSURE TO MAKE FURTHER SACRIFICES OF ITS OWN IN ORDER TO SURVIVE.

3. FROM A SOMEWHAT MORE PAROCHIAL VIEW, CESSATION OF PAN AM SERVICE WOULD PROVE A MAJOR IMPEDIMENT TO THE EFFICIENT OPERATION OF THE MISSION. ASIDE FROM THE NECESSITY OF ROUTING OFFICIAL TRAVELERS THROUGH ACCRA OR LAGOS TO MAKE MAXIMUM USE OF AMERICAN FLAG CARRIERS

AND THE ADDITIONAL EXPENSE THIS WILL ENTAIL, SUSPENSION OF PAN AM SERVICE WOULD ALSO CUT DOWN ON THE FREQUENCY OF APO SERVICE (A MAJOR MORALE FACTOR HERE) AND MAKE DELIVERIES OF MEAT AND FRESH PRODUCE TO THE EMBASSY COMMISSARY ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE. OF THE SIX OTHER CARRIERS OPERATING BETWEEN KINSHASA AND JOHANNESBURG, NONE IS WILLING TO CARRY THE WEEKLY COMMISSARY SHIPMENT SHOULD PAN AM CLOSE DOWN. SWITCHING TO LOCAL PROCUREMENT WOULD ENTAIL MUCH HIGHER COSTS, AS FOOD PRICES ARE PEGGED TO THE PARALLEL RATE, WHICH IS CURRENTLY RUNNING AT ALMOST FOUR TIMES THAT OF THE OFFICIAL RATE, AND SHORTAGES ARE THE RULE, NOT THE EXCEPTION.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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